

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 24, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman Lewis:

As you prepare for conference on the FY2006 Supplemental Appropriations bill, we are writing to urge you to include in the final bill a provision relating to the issue of permanent bases in Iraq.

The House-passed bill contains a provision (H.Amdt. 750) that would ensure that no funds in the bill would be used to enter into a base agreement with the government of Iraq. The Senate-passed bill contains a similar Biden amendment (S.Amdt. 3855), which prohibits funds to establish permanent military bases in Iraq or to exercise control over the oil infrastructure or oil resources of Iraq. Our preference is adoption of the Senate provision.

One area where policymakers and experts across the political spectrum agree is that the United States should make clear that it does not seek a permanent military presence in Iraq. A major factor fueling the insurgency in Iraq is the perception of many Iraqis that the United States has long terms aims in their country. General George Casey has testified gradually lowering the visibility of U.S. troops will remove one of the elements fueling the insurgency.

Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has testified that, "We have no desire to have our forces permanently in that country. We have no plans or no discussions under way to have permanent bases in that country." Congress should join the Administration in affirming this principal. Enacting the Senate "no permanent bases" provision in the FY2006 Supplemental Appropriations bill will send a clear signal to the Iraqi people that we fully support their efforts to establish democracy and exercise sovereignty. By making our intentions crystal clear, we would reassure the world that Iraqis will choose their own destinies.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Tom Allen
Member of Congress

Nancy Pelosi

John L. Dingens Jr.

Steven D. Roth

Doris O. Matsui

Sam Brown

Marty Meaham

Howard J. Berman

Lynn C. Woolsey

Ronald M. Payne

Liane E. Watson

Mike Thompson

Earl Blumenauer

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Jane Harman

Gerold Nadler

Carolyn B. Maloney

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Rich Kefauver

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Julia Carson

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